

**EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL  
MINUTES  
March 2, 2004**

The Edgefield County Council met at 6:00 P. M. Tuesday, March 2, 2004, in the County Council Chambers, 225 Jeter St., Edgefield, for its regular monthly meeting.

**Members present**

C. Monroe Kneece, Chairman  
Willie C. Bright, Vice Chairman  
Norman Dorn, Councilman  
Joel D. Hudson, Councilman  
B. Everette Kitchens, Councilman

**Others present**

Wayne Adams, Administrator  
John F. Byrd, Jr., County Attorney  
Barbara R. Stark, Clerk to Council

Chairman Kneece called the meeting to order and Councilman Hudson gave the invocation. Mr. Kneece asked the Commander of the Johnston American Legion, Zack Bush, to lead the group in the pledge of allegiance to the Flag.

Chairman Kneece, at this time, recognized American Legion Commander Zack Bush. Mr. Bush presented Mr. Kneece with a certificate for fifty years continuous service, for having served in the armed forces and as a member of the American Legion Post in Johnston. Commander Bush stated that Mr. Kneece served as Commander from 1968 to 1971.

Chairman Kneece noted that the Edgefield County School Board and the Edgefield County Council will hold the annual joint meeting on Thursday, April 29, 2004, 6:00 P.M. at the School District board room.

**Minutes**

Motion was made by Councilman Bright and seconded by Councilman Hudson, to approve the February 3, 2004 Minutes of the Edgefield County Council Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

**Reports**

No comments were made as to reports.

**Resolution**

Consensus of Council to approve Resolution No. 03-04-263, "A Resolution Opposing H.3793, a Bill Before the SC General Assembly That Would Grant Unlimited Expenditure Authority to Probate Judges in the Operations of Their Departments."

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**New Business**

The Council asked Mr. Lonnie Gillespie with Gillespie & Associates Land & Timber Management, Inc. for a clarification on bids he previously submitted to Council in February. These bids were for the sale of timber on county property at the Old Chain Gang Camp and the property directly behind the nursing home (Manor House), both located off Highway 25 north of Edgefield. Mr. Gillespie's suggestion at that time was the bid submitted by Weyerhaeuser (three bids were received). Mr. Gillespie was present at the March 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting concerning these bids. The Chairman asked Mr. Gillespie if the figures were a flat price or per ton. Mr. Gillespie stated it is per ton. "It is a per ton sale based on pay per unit as delivered to various mills. We have had good success with that in being able to beat the standard market pricing and conditions by offering it that way. We took some sample plots to get a general idea and accounted for approximately 2300 tons of timber; approximately thirty (30) acres total – both blocks. You would probably be looking at somewhere around \$90,000.00." Mr. Gillespie said he believed there was a question about the different buyers' prices, the different markets. The issue with that is some show a higher value for individual products but there are not enough of those particular products in the timber stand itself to effect the value enough to move that bidder pass the one I suggested that you accept. Sometimes in merchandising there are products that you actually can hurt yourself because you cut some at an odd length or cut at a different top diameter. That can determine how that tree will be hewn. Councilman Hudson made a motion, seconded by Councilman Dorn, to accept the bids of Weyerhaeuser. Motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Kitchens asked Mr. Gillespie his suggestion of what should be done once the timber is cut. The suggestion was to re-plant because it joins the other property that was cut several years ago. It would probably cost somewhere under \$200 per acre to re-seed. Some of the area behind the chain gang camp would not be suitable to re-seed because it is mixed with hardwood drainage area that feeds into a neighbor's pond. The county may be looking at about twenty to twenty five acres to re-plant.

Howard Gibson addressed Council concerning Ashwood Drive (previously named Spring Haven Drive in Spring Lake Subdivision off of Spring Haven Road). Mr. Gibson stated that this subdivision was put in several years ago the same time that Spring Lake Court was; that road has been accepted into the county system. Records indicate that it was put in according to county specifications. It does have a few problems because of utility cuts. The Transportation Committee has agreed to repair the road where the utility cuts are and get it back in good shape. The Committee has estimated about \$3,500 for this, and they have agreed to spend the money to do the work. The Transportation Committee recommends that the Council accept the road into the county maintenance system. Councilman Hudson made the motion to accept Ashwood, previously named Spring Haven Drive, into the county maintenance system. Motion seconded by Councilman Kitchens. Motion carried unanimously.

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The next item, Stag Run, was also discussed by Mr. Gibson. This road is located north on Highway 25 approximately one mile from the Town of Edgefield. It has all of the right-of-way but it does not have the proper width recommended by county specs. It has around eleven foot driving surface and the county specs say twenty. The Transportation Committee (C fund) has agreed to spend money for maintenance only. Leave as is and only maintain to keep in good passable condition is the only thing money is appropriated for at this time, with no indication of any paving in the future. With the criteria you have to go through for paving with the point system, it would very difficult for many years. It probably would be about ten years before it could be considered. Howard suggested putting a low speed limit sign on the road. Motion was made by Councilman Hudson, seconded by Councilman Dorn, to accept Stag Run into the county maintenance system with the stipulation there will be no paving, and to place a speed limit sign of twenty five (25) miles per hour. Motion carried.

Consideration of Fox Creek Terrace subdivision into the county maintenance system was the next agenda item. Fox Terrace is located off Highway 25 south. A request was brought before Council earlier from the school system. The only portion the Transportation Committee has agreed to spend "C" funds on is to the turn around, not the entire circle. Have to get easement right-of-way to cut a drainage ditch. Howard Gibson stated he would have an engineer to look at this before anything is done. Councilman Bright said before anything is done he would like to know what will be done. Consensus of council to postpone a decision until an engineering report can be obtained. Mr. Gibson said he would have some report at the next meeting.

The Administrator explained the next item of scheduling a public hearing for a zoning change request. The location of this zoning request is at the corner of Brighthop Road and US 25 down from the Bondex plant. The two parcels there are in General Development and the one that is referenced contains 2.05 acres which has some frontage on Hwy. 25 and also has a drive on Brighthop Road also. The request is to change from General Development to Industrial Development zoning. It is understood they may want to put a concrete batch plant there and that is not allowed in General Development. There are two requirements under the ordinance: post the property with a notice that there will be a public hearing and that the public hearing be advertised at least fifteen (15) days in advance. The public hearing could be a part of the April 6<sup>th</sup> council meeting. Motion was made by Chairman Kneece, seconded by Councilman Hudson, to schedule a public hearing to be held at the April 6, 2004, county council meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Council is in receipt of three bids to repair or replace the awning at the Library. Each contractor that looked at the awning felt it would be better to replace rather repair the canopy. The bids received for replacing the canopy: Edgefield Construction (\$4,500);

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Newman Builders (\$5,350) and Quattlebaun Construction (\$12,382). The Administrator told Council that the balance as of June 30, 2003 in the library maintenance fund is \$13,658.00. Motion was made by Councilman Kitchens, seconded by Councilman Bright, to accept the low bid of \$4,500.00 submitted by Edgefield Construction Company. Motion carried unanimously.

Howard Gibson gave the following FEMA update. "I think all of you are aware that as a result of the ice storm we had on the 26<sup>th</sup> of January, Edgefield County was declared a disaster area by FEMA. Because of that we are eligible for federal funds. The program is set up on a 75/25 match. However, the state is picking up twelve and a half percent, so our portion is twelve and a half percent of whatever is spent. We cannot lose because we have already spent the money so the county would be just getting some back. I have figured that what we have already spent with the Road Department comes close to \$30,000.00. In this, the sheriff's vehicles that were used from January 26<sup>th</sup> through the 30<sup>th</sup> and any EMS calls that were made related to the ice will be considered at \$11.00 an hour. Also, any overtime that any county employee incurred (sheriff, EMS, road department) will be recouped. The figure, county portion alone, should be somewhere around \$50,000.00. The disaster area also includes the Town of Johnston and the Town of Edgefield. They will file their own claims. The Water & Sewer Authority and the hospital are included. The hospital lost a generator and went on emergency power and also had to evacuate a wing during this time and will be reimbursed for that. The schools had to go on generators but had very few problems. I have not heard at this time if they want to be included. The big one is Aiken Co-op that will be involved but they will handle their own paperwork. FEMA would like for us to have this cleared up by the last of March, early April. The funds should come to us a couple weeks after that." Councilman Dorn wanted to know where the money would be put. Mr. Adams said that because the costs are assessed by department we would credit back those amounts to the budget. If we end up with an overage at the end of the year, unspent funds, and unless they are escrowed for a specific purpose, would go to the fund balance. The short answer is that it would go into the general fund.

Councilman Bright made the motion to approve the bid of \$12,313.40 submitted by Hi-Tech Power Systems, Inc. of Augusta, Ga., for up-fitting multi-agency command vehicle. This funding will come from a Homeland Security Grant. Motion seconded by Councilman Hudson. Motion carried unanimously. Grant funds have already been awarded but this goes through county procurement processes in order to qualify for the funding. The vehicle to be equipped is one presently at the sheriff's department. It will be used for dispatching purposes in emergency situations.

The Edgefield County Water & Sewer Authority has a pump station located on Star Road by the EMS station and the Health Department. As Council is aware, all CDBG grants

that the Water & Sewer Authority uses are awarded through the County.

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The Water & Sewer Authority is named a sub-recipient. This is a piece of equipment that was installed under an old CDBG grant and has been maintained by the Water & Sewer Authority since it was first installed. Council's consideration is needed concerning deeding the 0.02 acres and pump station to the Edgefield County Water & Sewer Authority. Motion was made by Councilman Kitchens, seconded by Councilman Bright, to deed the 0.02 acres (pump station) located on Star Road in Edgefield, to the Edgefield County Water & Sewer Authority. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Old Business**

Councilman Dorn brought before council the request to consider other audit firms for the County. Mr. Dorn feels that since Elliott Davis has been the County's auditing firm for so many years it is time to secure another firm. The Administrator explained that the last time Elliott Davis' prices were compared to other counties' and they were in line – in fact they were the lowest on just about everything that was considered. Mr. Adams' suggestion was to do this on a proposal basis, rather than a straight bid. Factors will be considered other than price, such as, qualifications of personnel that will be handling the account, experience with governmental work (particularly county work, might be a criteria). This does not mean Elliott, Davis would not be selected. Mr. Adams said he felt the other financial offices should be included in a committee to judge the RFP's. The financial offices include the Treasurer, the Auditor, and the Finance Director. Motion made by Councilman Dorn, seconded by Councilman Bright, to go out for RFP's concerning the selection of an auditing firm for Edgefield County. Motion carried unanimously. Consensus of council was to discuss later the involvement of the Treasurer, the Auditor, and the Finance Director to judge the RFP's.

### **Guests**

Eddie Kale from the Merriwether area addressed council and presented pictures of trash being dumped behind houses on Murrah Road along a railroad track. There is trash also in the front of homes – even on the roofs. Mr. Kale stated that at one time there was a truck in a front yard that was full of trash. The trash was dumped in the yard and the truck was driven away. Howard Gibson spoke and stated he had already talked with DHEC concerning this site and a site located near Fox Terrace.

Councilman Dorn asked about junk cars – if this could be addressed in the same manner. Mr. Adams said there two ways to address the issue of junk cars or the policing of them. The state law allows the sheriff to police junk vehicles without any other ordinance passed by the county. If the county wants someone like a litter control officer to do the policing, the county would have to appoint that person by ordinance. The sheriff can do those things without the ordinance. The statute has descriptions of what qualifies as an abandoned vehicle. One of the things is an unregistered vehicle that is eight years old or

older. DHEC holds the property owner liable in most every instance.

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**Executive Session**

Motion was made by Councilman Dorn, seconded by Councilman Bright, to convene in executive session under Code Section 30-4-70 (a) (1) of the South Carolina Code of Laws to discuss the Edgefield County Recreation Director's resignation, and return to regular session at the discretion of the Chairman.

After returning to regular session, the Chairman stated that no action had been taken in executive session.

**Claims approved as follows:**

- A. PAYROLL: 02/02 thru 02/15/04
- Regular.....\$109,161.87
- PAYROLL: 02/16/04 thru 02/29/04
- Regular.....\$112,679.82
- B. General Operating.....\$451,195.40

There being no further business, Councilman Dorn made the motion to adjourn. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 6, 2004.

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C. Monroe Kneece, Chairman

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Willie C. Bright, Vice Chairman

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Norman Dorn, Councilman

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Joel D. Hudson, Councilman

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B. Everette Kitchens, Councilman

ATTEST

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Barbara R. Stark, Clerk to Council

